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SUBJECT: UKRAINE: OUR UKRAINE INSIDER POROSHENKO ON RADA
MAJORITY COALITION TALKS, TYMOSHENKO

REF: A. KIEV 1531

1B. KIEV 1663

Classified By: Ambassador for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

11. (C) During an April 28 meeting with Ambassador, Our Ukraine (OU) insider Petro Poroshenko emphatically denied he was using his influence with the Prosecutor General to put pressure on Tymoshenko lieutenant Oleksandr Turchynov (refs A and B). Coalition talks with the Tymoshenko Bloc (BYuT) were continuing, but there was no progress to report; President Yushchenko still seemed unwilling to accept Tymoshenko as prime minister and was "listening" to influential advocates of cooperation with the Party of Regions. Poroshenko claimed that he was personally opposed to an "Orange-Blue" pairing. Poroshenko related that he had spoken at length with Tymoshenko on April 27; she had sought, and then spurned, his assistance in forming a BYuT-OU coalition in the Kiev city council. Poroshenko confided that he had spoken with Tymoshenko during the Orthodox Easter weekend (April 22-23); she had called him to ask "what he wanted" in return for his support for her serving again as PM. Poroshenko said he had replied that he wanted her to be more flexible and less high-handed in the coalition talks. Poroshenko groused that Tymoshenko could not be trusted, stressing that she was not candid and not "principled." It was very possible, Poroshenko warned, that there could be a crisis scenario in which Tymoshenko and Yushchenko simply could not get a coalition deal done. End summary.

Poroshenko: Denies Pressuring Turchynov...

12. (C) During an April 28 meeting with Ambassador, Our Ukraine (OU) insider Petro Poroshenko denied that he was behind Prosecutor General Oleksandr Medvedko's recent decision to issue an arrest warrant for Tymoshenko lieutenant Oleksandr Turchynov (ref A). Poroshenko claimed he had not spoken with Medvedko "for three or four months"; informally, Poroshenko had heard that the PG's office did not want to actually arrest Turchynov, but simply question him about the alleged destruction of SBU files on organized crime figure Seymon Mogilievich. Poroshenko added that he thought Turchynov was innocent; the files had been destroyed by Turchynov's then-deputy at the SBU/now Tymoshenko Bloc MP-elect, Andriy Kozhemyakin. Poroshenko protested that he had "no motivation" to put pressure on Turchynov (ref B).

...Offers Version of Latest Coalition Talks...

13. (C) Poroshenko said that the new Rada would likely convene after May 20. He noted that coalition talks with Bloc

Tymoshenko (BYuT) were continuing, but there was no progress to report. Poroshenko had spoken briefly with President Yushchenko following an Orthodox Easter (April 23) church service, and Yushchenko "still did not seem ready" to accept Tymoshenko as an Orange coalition prime minister. As for the prospect of an Orange-Blue pairing between OU and the Party of Regions, Poroshenko claimed that he was "90 percent certain" he would vote against such a deal; however, Yushchenko, listening to the whispers of advisers like Prime Minister Yekhanurov, seemed "more ready than I am" to form a coalition with Regions. Poroshenko added that he had spoken on April 27 with Party of Regions leader Viktor Yanukovych about the possibility of OU cooperation with Regions at the local level.

...Provides Details on Phone Conversations with Tymoshenko...

¶ 14. (C) Poroshenko also related that he had spoken at length on April 27 with Tymoshenko, who sought his help in building an OU-BYuT coalition in the Kiev city council. Poroshenko said he had met with Tymoshenko's emissaries and agreed to support BYuT's preferences for positions on the council and in Kiev's district governments. Following those discussions, Tymoshenko had called Poroshenko to abruptly declare that BYuT no longer needed to work with OU; BYuT candidates did not need OU's help to secure their positions -- a prediction that Poroshenko said turned out to be wrong.

...And (Again) Emphasizes that Tymoshenko Cannot be Trusted

¶ 15. (C) Confiding to Ambassador that he had also spoken with Tymoshenko during Orthodox Easter weekend (April 22-23), Poroshenko complained that Tymoshenko was getting

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increasingly difficult to deal with. She had called him to ask "what he wanted" in return for supporting an Orange coalition with her as prime minister. Poroshenko had replied that "what he wanted" was for her to be more flexible and "not issue ultimatums" during the coalition talks, as her high-handedness was senselessly antagonizing key OU players. Repeating a familiar refrain, Poroshenko stressed that Tymoshenko could not be trusted; she was not candid and was not a "principled" person. It was "very possible," Poroshenko warned, that there would be a crisis scenario in which Tymoshenko and Yushchenko could not get a coalition deal done. After speaking with Tymoshenko, it was clear that she "did not trust" OU, Poroshenko said. And when there is no trust, he added, "it is hard to get things done."

Comment

¶ 16. (C) As with much of what we are hearing about the motivations, goals, characters, etc. of the various "other sides" in the majority coalition talks, Poroshenko's claims about his arch-nemesis Tymoshenko and his protestations of innocence re PG moves against Tymoshenko lieutenant Turchynov have to be taken with a large grain of salt. But this grain may be larger than most of the others. While we have no proof in hand, too many interlocutors point to Poroshenko as one of OU's leading proponents of a coalition with Regions to simply believe he would be at most a reluctant follower were Yushchenko and Yekhanurov to take the party that direction.

¶ 17. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website at www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev.

Herbst